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28 July 1960

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chairman, United States Intelligence Board

SUBJECT : Proposal to Release Materials  
from the TALENT System

1. The objective of this paper is to determine whether the materials and information, or portion thereof, now in the TALENT Control System should be downgraded and released from the System.

2. Photographic and ELINT materials (and data derived therefrom) which have been collected by the U-2 have been held in the TALENT Security Control System for the sole purpose of guarding the fact of overflight and the nature of the sophisticated gear involved therein. The fact of overflight over the past four years has now been compromised through the May 1 incident and its aftermath. Likewise compromised, we must assume, is some of the sophisticated gear involved in collection, although these details are less widely known than the compromise of overflight. While there have been accusations of overflight of Chinese Communist and European Satellites' territory, there has been no public admission by this Government of the overflight of Communist China, European Satellites, or the Middle East, Indonesia, and Tibet.

3. It is not anticipated that the political authorities will permit overflight of the USSR during the remainder of the present administration. It is believed premature to judge at this time the circumstances of 1961 and beyond. It is prudent to make the assumption in consideration of release of TALENT materials from the System that overflight materials will be obtained in 1961 and after (even though we cannot be certain of that),

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and that such actions will be as sensitive as, or more so than, they have been in the last four years. This possibility plus the planned use of the TALENT System for the protection of other sensitive sources of collection strongly argues for the retention of the TALENT Security Control System.

4. The TALENT System, as such, has not been compromised. The security, communications, processing, dissemination, storage, requirements, and recovery of information procedures and arrangements which have been established in the TALENT System are well known within cleared elements of the United States [REDACTED] intelligence communities. Whereas it is not impossible to construct a new security control system for a future eventuality, continuance of the present system would be more efficient and economical. Furthermore, certain data bearing on operations and materials on those areas not released will continue to require protection even if TALENT materials on the USSR are removed from the System. 25X1C

5. The gradual expansion of the membership in the TALENT Security Control System both in terms of organizational units of this Government and the number of officers within those units were judged adequate to permit the use of TALENT materials for needs critical to National Security balanced against the then overriding need to protect the source. Ways and means were also devised to sanitize some of the TALENT raw materials and the information so that it could be used outside of the System.

6. In spite of these efforts a great deal of information has not been made available to many who need it for intelligence, operations and R&D purposes in support of National Security. Sanitization procedures, although adequate for critical needs, impose an administrative burden that is incompatible with the production of basic and technical intelligence. Eight distinct actions are necessary to complete the administrative procedures. Frequently the sanitization process results in incomplete, generalized, fragmentary information, and they cannot be assessed by the user as to its authoritative quality. Numbers are rounded off, distances are estimated, and, on occasion, deliberate inaccuracies are injected as a means of disguising the source.

7. In our estimation the burden of protecting the source from knowledge by U.S. officials has greatly lessened, if it has not disappeared. To withhold unnecessarily information that may be totally lacking from other sources or it more accurate and pertinent than that from other sources, only hurts the United States' ability to provide answers to a wide variety of problems of importance to National Security.

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8. In its simplest form the case for release of TALENT photography information, and intelligence reports from the System rests on the efficient use of available manpower to achieve timely utilization of information for important tasks. It is now highly important that that material and information which has been obtained on a vast variety of subjects, including all of the highly critical ones, such as, guided missiles, bombers, nuclear energy, BW, CW, Naval installations, anti-ballistic missile systems, and an extensive array of other subjects of lower priority but still of considerable importance be made available for the fullest exploitation. The release of TALENT photography from the System at the Secret level will enhance at least threefold the manpower capabilities of the U.S. intelligence community in the exploitation of TALENT for such purposes as the following:

- a. Production of maps, charts, and mosaics for the use of strike forces.
- b. Development and extension of stereo compilations of geodetic control data.
- c. Strike planning and target folder preparation.
- d. Support of R&D (greater availability of TALENT material is tremendously important to such scientific advisory groups as the President's Scientific Advisory Committee, ARPA, and others. It is necessary to bring all possible expertise and imagination to bear on the joint problems of the development of counter measures against Soviet attack and counter counter measures to ensure the success of our own attack.)

9. Whereas the need for wider access through downgrading is applicable to all TALENT materials, the need is especially strong for that relating to the USSR. It is proposed therefore initially to release materials and information on the USSR only. The ARC will take stock on this experience and will thereupon report its recommendations on release of materials on other areas.

10. It is proposed at this time to downgrade to SECRET and to release materials and information derived from overflight of the USSR prior to 1 May 1960, from the T System. (Consideration was given to downgrading to Top Secret and the ARC concluded that such would not adequately meet the needs of the U.S. intelligence community.) Under this proposal

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TALENT materials and reports would be selected by each agency in conformity with the substantive requirements of the agency as defined by the senior intelligence officer.

11. Downgrading Procedures: Photography

a. The following must remain within TALENT Control: original negatives, roll duplicate negatives, mission plots or positions thereof except for target locations, mission coverage summaries, analytical data produced by CIA/PIC for operational support, and tracker of a given mission except in single frames.

b. Delete all titling on photography. Retitling may, but is not required to show: camera configuration, month (only), Z time, location or coordinates, and scale (not expressed with K factor). All photographs acquired through overflight will be given an acquisition number by CIA/PIC. This number will be printed on all downgraded reproduction which will permit ready reference by all consumers to the original negative and frame number. The acquisition number of all frames then downgraded and released by any consumer will be filed with CIA/PIC.

c. Photographic Interpretation Reports and Intelligence Reports: The following actions are required:

- (1) Approval by the originating office or offices.
- (2) Deletion of reference to (a) TALENT and CHESS, (b) statements of requirements, and (c) any attribution of collection source.
- (3) No reference to track.
- (4) Confirmation of photograph to be reproduced in the report in accordance with the specification listed in paragraph 11 b above.
- (5) Classification and control will be consistent with the classification and control of non-TALENT sources revealed.
- (6) Report series indicator and report number will be different from TALENT report number.

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(7) Reports will be disseminated thru normal document handling channels to all intelligence agencies with whom secret reports are normally exchanged. In addition it is mandatory that each agency inform the TALENT Control Officer of each member agency thru T channels by form memorandum of such releases.

(8) Two copies of each report will be filed with PIC via the TALENT System prepared in accordance with these procedures. Two copies will also be sent to the [REDACTED] the normal T liaison channels of the originating agency. 25X1C

(9) Original TALENT report will not be recalled.

(10) Original printed TALENT reports may not be released under any circumstances.

(11) Information not hitherto published will when published conform to each of the applicable foregoing procedures.

12. Downgrading Procedures: ELINT. ELINT reports may be downgraded in accordance with paragraph 11 c, (1) through (11), except for paragraph (4). ELINT tapes will remain in the System since they have already been exploited.

25X1C 13. Classification and Control. TALENT materials, reports, and information prepared in accordance with the specifications outlined in paragraphs 10, 11, and 12 will be classified SECRET, NOFRON EXCEPT [REDACTED] (downgrading prohibited). Information drawn from downgraded materials may not under any circumstances be incorporated in any manner in publication or uses of lower than Secret classification.

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14. Coordination [REDACTED] 25X1C The substance of this paper has been discussed [REDACTED] who stated that he was in agreement with it, his only concern being the working out of the practical details. It is understood that upon notification of the approval of this paper it might take some time for [REDACTED] 25X1C to work out the details of applying the required procedures within the [REDACTED] TALENT community.

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RECOMMENDATIONS:

15. That release of materials, reports, and information on the USSR acquired prior to 1 May 1960 from the TALENT Security Control System be authorized in accordance with the provisions set forth in paragraphs 10, 11, 12, and 13,

16. That the ARC at an appropriate time review this experience and submit recommendations for expansion to include other areas.



Chairman  
Ad Hoc Requirements Committee

OACSI TCO (cys 2 & 3)  
ONI TCO (cys 4, 5 & 6)  
AFCIN TCO (cys 7 & 8)  
NSA TCI (cys 9 & 10)  
State TCO (cys 11 & 12)  
JCS TCO (cys 13 & 14)

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DDP (cys 15 & 16)

[REDACTED] (cys 17 & 18)

DDI (P) TCO (cys 19 & 20)

DDI (P) TCO (cys 1 & 21) for the Federal Bureau of Investigation

OCI TCO (cys 22 & 23)

OSI TCO (cys 24 & 25)

OSI TCO (cys 26 & 27) for the Atomic Energy Commission

ORR TCO (cys 28 & 29)

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IO/OPS/DPD/DDP (cys 30 & 31)

DDI (P) TCO (cys 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, & 38) for [REDACTED] USIB

C/DMD/PIC (cys 39 & 40)

Director, PIC (cys 41 & 42)

CIA TSO (cys 43 & 44)

SO/Admin Br/DPD/DDP (cys 45 & 46)

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DDP TCO (cys 47 & 48)

[REDACTED] (cys 49, 50, 51, 52, 53)

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